

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 11, 2016

Agenda Item: 2016-2017 Mountain Goat Hunting Season, Quota Ranges and HD Boundaries

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 minutes

Background

Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for most game species. This happens every other year between December and final adoptions in February. In proposing regulations to the Commission, FWP proposes adopting the existing (2015) structure except for specific changes. Proposals are based on population status and/or other circumstances.

FWP is proposing to introduce adult female-only (nanny) licenses for the first time to facilitate population reduction and maintenance in the Crazy Mountains where goat numbers exceed the objective of 300 by 25-75 goats since 2009. Nanny licenses have been used with success in Utah and Colorado for more than five years with minimal enforcement problems and high hunter participation. Online identification courses have helped hunters be confident and accurate in harvesting nannies. Other proposals include opening the Gallatin Special Management Area to hunting in HDs 314 and 362 and clarifying boundary language in HDs 327 and 328.

This proposal differs from that adopted in December in that FWP is dropping the proposal to no longer require a mandatory physical check of harvested goats. As in the past, there will remain a mandatory check of harvested goats. All other elements of those adopted in December remain unchanged.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Mountain goat season comments were received during scoping and included comments about drawing odds and lower moose populations. Public comment ran from Dec. 10 to Jan 22. We received 36 comments. Among 11 comments that spoke to HD 313 all but two favored the nanny-only licenses. The 25 other comment spoke to once I a lifetime licenses, advocacy for archery-only licenses, 7 supported the proposals, 6 wanted to retain mandatory check, 3 were in favor of removing the Gallatin Special Management Area, and others spoke to opening new areas. All comments are in the Commission packet.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2015 (status quo). No change would challenge the supporting justifications behind proposals.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

Rationale for individual proposals was included in the Dec. 10th Commission information packets and may be further articulated at the Feb. 11th Commission meeting.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the final 2016 and 2017 Mountain Goat Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as presented by FWP. I also move to adopt all other portions of the previous 2014-2015 mountain goat season regulations not affected by the Commission's actions today.